

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Job Description

JOB TITLE	: Benefits Assessment Officer
GRADE	: F
POST NO	: Various
DIRECTORATE	: Corporate Resources
UNIT	: Benefits & Welfare
REPORTS TO	: Benefits & Welfare Manager
RESPONSIBLE FOR	: None
LIAISON WITH	: Customers and their representatives, Officers and Councillors of the Authority, DWP, Job Centre Plus, Pensions Service, HMRC, other relevant organisations and stakeholders including landlords.

MAIN PURPOSE

To provide a modern, efficient and effective assessment service to all claimants for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, in a customer focussed manner. To maintain high standards of accuracy to protect Exeter City Council's recovery of Housing Benefit subsidy by ensuring decisions are compliant with legislation and relevant guidance. Provide advice, guidance and information to customers, landlords and/or their representatives and to colleagues.

MAIN DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES (MDR)

1. Obtain and verify evidence to support benefit claims and changes in circumstances.
2. Maintain accurate records using systems such as MRI, DIP, and Searchlight.
3. Assess new claims and changes of circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support including calculation, classification and recovery of overpayments.
4. Notify claimants of decisions and ensure correct recording for audit and subsidy purposes.
5. Determine Council Tax liability and apply appropriate discounts and exemptions.
6. Respond to customer queries via phone, email, and face-to-face interactions.
7. Participate in professional development, including maintaining knowledge of changes to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support regulations, and support the training of colleagues.
8. Remain vigilant for signs of fraudulent activity and refer cases appropriately.
9. Identify and support vulnerable customers, signposting to additional services where needed.
10. Undertake other duties commensurate with the grade and nature of the role.

DATE LAST UPDATED: November 2025

Person Specification

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GRADE : F

POST NO : Various

DIRECTORATE : Corporate Resources

UNIT : Benefits & Welfare

Qualifications & Knowledge

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable (E/D)	Method of Assessment
Minimum 5 GCSE to include Maths & English at grade 5 or above or equivalent	E	C
NVQ Level 3 diploma in Local Taxation, Benefits and Advice (QCF) or equivalent	E	C
Experience of assessing Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support claims	E	A/I/T
Good current knowledge of welfare benefit legislation and administration procedures.	E	A/I
Awareness of data protection and confidentiality requirements	E	A/I
Understanding of Council Tax legislation and liability rules	D	A/I

Special Requirements & Skills

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable (E/D)	Method of Assessment
Able to understand and interpret complex legislation and apply it confidently	E	I/T
Able to process claims quickly whilst maintaining extremely high levels of accuracy	E	I/T
Strong IT skills including use of benefit systems and Microsoft Office	E	A/I/T
Ability to work independently and manage workload effectively	E	A/I
Analytical skills to identify discrepancies and resolve issues	E	I/T
Commitment to continuous improvement and learning	E	A/I

Other

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable (E/D)	Method of Assessment
Committed to customer care and quality service provision	E	I
Excellent communication skills to explain complex benefit issues to a range of customer both orally and in writing	E	A/I/T
Ability to remain calm and professional under pressure	E	I
Team player with a flexible and proactive approach	E	I
Understanding of equality and diversity in service delivery	D	A/I

CATEGORY: **A:** Application, **C:** Certificates, **T:** Testing, **I:** Interview, **R:** References.

COMPLETED BY : **Benefits & Welfare Lead**
DATE : **November 2025**